

Priory Junior School

English Policy

Policy Date: October 2026

Policy Review Date: October 2028

Aims and Objectives

In English lessons, we aim to:

- Provide enjoyable, relevant, challenging and broad-ranging learning opportunities to enable pupils to become literate.
- Surround the children with an environment of high-quality language, in spoken and written form.
- Take a multi-disciplinary approach emphasising the relationship between speaking and listening, reading, writing and spelling.
- Give opportunities to perform aspects of their learning to a wide audience.
- Promote the development of key skills through cross-curricular learning.
- Support all pupils to achieve a high standard in reading and writing.
- Give daily feedback. (See the Marking Policy).
- Create learning environments that promote ambition and curiosity.

Curriculum Organisation

How We Teach English

English is inherent in all subjects and the ability to express ideas both orally and in writing is emphasised in all areas of the curriculum. English lessons are in line with the National Curriculum and the school curriculum map outlines which genres are taught within each year group. It is encouraged that English lessons are linked to the year groups' current topic and should be cross-curricular when suitable. It is recognised that English plays a fundamental part of foundation lessons (such as History and Geography); there is the expectation for teachers to plan in opportunities for pupils to practise their writing, reading and oral skills in the foundation lessons.

Teaching in English is based around this structure:

- Whole class reading lessons, three times a week lasting 25 minutes. This includes reading a new text, exploring new/unfamiliar language, answering a variety of questions based on the text, summarising the text and sequencing.
- Daily English lessons, lasting 45 minutes, comprising of paired talk, live modelling of writing, a main activity (which would usually be a writing opportunity, or oracy based) and a plenary (usually proof reading and/or celebrating children's work).
- The teaching of grammar and punctuation is embedded within lessons and teachers make efforts to model and reinforce relevant vocabulary. The application of taught grammar and punctuation should be embedded within a relevant writing opportunity, linked to the learning journey.
- Key grammar objectives from previous years may be re-covered during stand-alone grammar sessions 2x weekly (15 minutes).
- Lessons have a real purpose and audience whenever possible. All units of work must have an audience and purpose which should be discussed and decided upon with the class when the text type is introduced to the children. This will be at the centre of 'Boxing Up' displays (based on James Durran's Rethinking Success Criteria). Boxing Up displays emphasise the effects that features of writing has on the reader and this display should be a live working wall throughout the unit of work and be used as a scaffold during extended writing at the end of a unit.
- Frequent editing and proofreading opportunities where pupils are required to check back over their work thoroughly to remove errors in syntax (secretarial editing) and improve the content (editing for impact).

Inclusion

- Successful inclusive provision at Priory is seen as the responsibility of the whole school community, permeating all aspects of school life and applicable to all our pupils.
- Pupils who have not yet made expected progress in reading and writing are discussed at pupil progress meetings. In these meetings, strategies for promoting progress are agreed and put in place by the class teacher. These strategies are then reviewed in the next meeting.
- All children are enabled access to the curriculum through adapted learning activities and support given in the form of working walls (Boxing Up), teacher-modelled examples, scaffolding, word banks, clicker 8 and practical sentence composition resources.

- Pupils identified as struggling with reading fluency and comprehension take part in regular reading interventions.
- Pupils requiring support with spellings and/or speech and language attend structured interventions with specified adults.
- Daily, teachers and TAs support vulnerable (focus) children and children below age related expectations. This may be by providing pre-planned support, support within the lesson or support after the lesson.

Speaking and Listening

There are many and varied opportunities for the direct teaching of Speaking and Listening skills, both explicitly in English related sessions and across the full curriculum. These include:

- Ensuring that each adult and other children provide good role models.
- Teaching the children the difference between standard and non-standard forms of spoken English and when each of these can be appropriately used.
- Ensuring opportunities and 'scaffolding' for discussion, individually, in pairs and in groups.
- Teaching children how to be an active listener and insisting that children employ these skills through all interactions with children and adults across the school.
- Weekly 'sharing assemblies', Harvest assemblies, Class assemblies, Christmas Productions, and the Year 6 production give children the opportunity to perform to a live audience. There are also many opportunities to share work within classes and to other adults around school.

Reading

Phonics/Word Recognition

At the start of Year 3, children that did not pass the Phonics Screening Check in Year 2 and children with phonics gaps identified by the Year 3 baseline, are immediately placed in phonics intervention to close gaps and accelerate progress. Adults that lead this will use the Little Wandle Phonics and/or Rapid Catch-Up programme. Little Wandle is used to provide continuity from Priory Infants School. When children reach Year 5 and still are not able to pass the screening check, the intervention LEAPS is used to improve word recognition.

Guided Reading

Pupils take part in Whole Class Guided Reading 3 times a week where they complete different activities around one text. Over the course of a year, pupils will be exposed to a wide range of texts during their reading lesson: ensuring that they experience different reading genres and writing purposes. For example, fictional stories, non-fiction newspaper reports, poetry.

The lessons are based around the following structure:

Before Lesson 1 – Sometimes, pupils are given the text to read independently as part of their Early Morning Work. Some pupils may preview the text with an adult as well to increase their confidence in reading the text ahead of the lesson.
Lesson 1 – Pupils read the text. This may be aloud to an adult, aloud to a peer, independently, spoken alongside an adult, or read by an adult to the whole class. Pupils then complete a 'word detective' sheet which allows pupils to learn new vocabulary, explore words through finding synonyms and antonyms, interpreting new words through their use in sentences, answering true or false statements, and learning dictionary skills.
Lesson 2 – Based on the National Curriculum Reading Strands, teachers create a variety of questions for pupils to show their comprehension of the text. In particular, pupils focus on developing their retrieval and inferential skills. Teachers model how pupils should be answering these questions to build their confidence and there are sentence stems available for pupils to use. Teachers should regularly model 'skimming and scanning' and finding information in the text before answering a question.
Lesson 3 – Pupils complete a final activity to develop a different skill that is essential to successful reading and comprehension. This could be summarising, sequencing or interpreting characters feelings. This final lesson may vary between weeks but is still planned to develop the National Curriculum objectives for each year group.

Reading for pleasure

At Priory Junior School, we are committed to creating a community of readers. As such we approach reading for pleasure in the following ways:

- **One to one reading**

Children will read to teachers and other adults regularly according to their individual needs. This increases reading fluency and intonation so that pupils are able to access texts more comfortably. Pupils whose reading age is below their chronological age should read daily to an adult.

- **Reading at home**

The expectation is that children will read their reading book to an adult daily at home, with the minimum requirement being at least three times a week. Children's reading will be recorded in the green Log Book; parents and teacher's comments will also be recorded here.

- **Reading environments**

Reading resources will be organised to develop a stimulating and literate environment throughout the school. Reading corners will be inviting and encourage a love of reading.
In the library, fiction books are organised alphabetically and non-fiction books are ordered according to the Dewey system. Each class visits the library once a fortnight where pupils are able to change their books. The library is also open during lunchtime for book changing or pupils are able to attend fun reading-related activities with our school librarian.

- **Reading books**

Children will take books home regularly from the school library/class book corners. Pupils will be notified what reading band they should be reading to ensure books are accessible whilst providing the right level of challenge. When pupils have a reading age of 11 or above, they are then classed as free readers and have free choice of books in the library. Pupils are encouraged to read a variety of texts.

- **PJS Delivery**

Every two years, the PJS Delivery system will be reading themed and use pizza boxes to transport books around the school. These books will be related to a theme for that month and cover a wide range of genres, interests and age levels. Teachers are expected to read these books with the class, complete the review sheet and pass on to the next class. Displays of these books and completed review sheets are in the library. The PJS Delivery system will alternate between a reading focus and a writing focus (writing scrolls).

- **Mystery Reader**

Parents, carers, grandparents and other adults at home are invited into school to read a book to their child's class.

- **Themed Weeks**

Where appropriate, themed weeks (eg Book Week, First week back in September, Science Week, Black History Month) are based around a high-quality text that is chosen to have a specific purpose and engage the children.

<u>Writing</u>

Children are taught writing skills in daily English lessons (underpinned by the National Curriculum expectations) with grammar and punctuation skills embedded within lessons. Where suitable, a cross-curricular approach is encouraged and lessons are planned by each teacher to overtly show the link with other subjects, therefore giving the children the opportunity to write in a wide variety of contexts and study subject specific vocabulary through shared texts.

Each English unit follows a multi-phase planning format where the pupils spend time reading a text; discussing the book/characters/features of specific text type; capturing ideas for new writing; contextualised grammar; planning, drafting, editing, and sometimes publishing their writing.

- Whilst reading texts, children are supported by the class teacher to identify effective techniques. Discussions are captured and placed on the Boxing Up working wall, which are then added to throughout the unit of work.
- Pupils generate ideas for a new piece of writing that they will complete. This may include drama activities such as 'hot-seating', 'in your shoes' and 'jumping into a picture' to really explore characters and situations ready for detailed writing.
- Pupils will be exposed to multiple high-quality examples of the text type they are going to be writing at the end of the unit of work. A part of this will be the 'features lesson' where children will look at the structural and language features of the text type. This will provide lots of material for the Boxing Up display, which can then be added to during the contextualised grammar phase.
- Within each unit, pupils will study various grammar elements outlined in the National Curriculum. The grammar is contextualised so that pupils understand how it supports the type of text they are writing and the inclusion of this new grammar becomes seamless.

- The next phase involves group, paired and/or individual planning and drafting. The teacher here models to the class and scaffolds where appropriate. Pupils then complete an independent write. Proofreading takes place at the end of the write, as with any other piece of writing.
- The final phase involves all pupils editing their work. The Class Teacher may select a focus for editing based on what pupils are writing. This is shared with modelling of how to complete. Pupils are then able to edit their writing to improve the content (editing for impact). The final phase may also include a publishing opportunity, depending on what the agreed purpose and audience of the writing was towards the beginning of the unit. EG publishing for a class book for others to enjoy; publishing to send to a museum, company, politician etc; publishing for a school display.

At the end of each unit, teachers assess the writing and record assessments on the writing trackers for their class.

Editing and proofreading

As underpinned by the National Curriculum, pupils should proofread to remove errors in syntax (secretarial editing) and edit to improve content (editing for impact). Teachers use English lessons to teach these skills so that pupils can edit and proofread successfully across all subjects.

- **Proofreading**

Pupils proofread their work in purple pen to correct spelling and punctuation errors. Pupils are given a year group specific tick sheet to guide them; this should be displayed on desks so pupils are aware of the expectations for their year group. This should happen after every piece of writing and in all subjects.

- **Editing**

Pupils evaluate their writing and edit to make improvements in the content (editing for impact). The focus of these edits must be informed by the Boxing Up display. This may be guided by a whole class focus as well as independent changes made to word choice, or sentence organisation. This is also completed in purple pen and should be carried out after each end-of-unit, independent write.

Spelling

Spelling is taught 4x a week following the Oak National Academy scheme of spelling. The chosen spellings are taken from the National Curriculum; pupils will learn a mixture of spelling patterns and a list of statutory spelling words for Year 3 & 4 and Year 5 & 6. These lists are located in pupil log books for reference. Pupils are given a set of spellings words which they are able to practise at home, preferably with an adult. These words are then reviewed the following week in class through dictation. In school, pupils are taught the spelling rule and complete different activities to support the learning of the spelling word and/or rule. Children learn spellings in a variety of activities and are explicitly taught the morphology and etymology of words.

Teaching structure is as follows:
Lesson 1 – dictation using words from previous week's learning + entrance quiz for new week's focus.
Lesson 2 – teaching the new rule
Lesson 3 – teaching/applying the new rule
Lesson 4 – applying the new rule + exit quiz.

Those children who struggle to access the age-appropriate spellings are taught and tested against the high frequency words and the phonic phases, where deemed appropriate, for each pupil. Spelling interventions are also put in place to support pupils who may require additional support with spellings. Children are tested termly using NFER assessments to monitor progress.

Handwriting

In Years 3 and 4, handwriting is taught daily (15 minutes) using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Each week, pupils practise a join or letter formation to develop their legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting. In each session, pupils complete a warm up, watch the teacher model the correct join and complete independent practice.

Every effort is made by the Class Teacher to ensure that children are supported by the appropriate equipment and teaching.

- Pencil grips/triangular pens are used when needed.

- Slopes or wedged cushions may be supplied to pupils to aid writing style.
- Differentiated activities may be given to support letter formation.

Pupils are to see the Nelson Handwriting Scheme embedded around the school. Therefore, teachers are asked to write in this style when modelling to the class, use the electronic font available for any activities that pupils will complete and use the electronic font to create headers for display purposes.
During Year 3 and 4, when children's handwriting is of a consistently high standard in all lessons and subjects, children are given a pen licence and pen, which are awarded during the fortnightly lower school assembly.

In Y5 and Y6, children will be expected to use a pen correctly in all subjects, excluding Maths. Children that still require support in Years 5 and 6 are identified and intervention is discussed with the SENCO/English Lead.

Continuity and Progression

Close links have been made with Priory Infant School to ensure continuity and progression. Pupils' English books are transferred from the year 2 to the year 3 teachers at the end of each summer term. Annual meetings are also held between the infants and year 3 teachers to discuss pupils' individual progress and targets.

Teachers plan in line of the National Curriculum, ensuring progression across all areas of English.

In Year 6, pupils complete a transitional project for Longsands which includes reading and writing activities. This is completed in a book which will be passed on to teaching staff at Longsands School.

Resources

General resources will be kept in the Resource/PPA Room. Topic related reading material will be kept in each classroom for pupil use in lessons and general reading. New resources will be purchased by negotiation between Class Teachers and the Subject Leader, within the budget allowed annually for English. The Subject Leader will prioritise needs when making purchasing decisions.

Health and Safety

If any performances incur Health and Safety issues the teachers responsible for this will complete a risk assessment.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

<u>Formative assessments</u>

- Pupils' work is marked daily by teachers and for each extended piece of writing, writing assessment trackers are updated for every child. This is a tool for teachers to easily identify gaps in learning for individual children, groups of children and whole cohorts of children. Planning is then expected to be adapted for the next unit of work based on these assessments.

- An Improvement/response mark takes place weekly on one piece of writing in the English book. Comments are tied to the learning objective and aim to move the pupil on in their learning.

<u>Summative assessments</u>

- Each pupil is assessed for reading using the assessment sheets in class assessment booklets. Each pupil is assessed for writing using the electronic writing assessment trackers. The assessments are then entered into the school online system, once a term.
- Speech and language development is also assessed termly in line with the National Curriculum year group expectations.
- Parents receive termly attainment and effort reports for Writing and Reading.
- An annual report which details the pupils' progress and recommended next steps are reported to parents for Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening once a year.

- NFER Tests are taken termly for Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling in years 3-5. In Year 6, past papers for End of Key Stage Two assessments are used termly. QLA information for all of these assessments are then used to inform future planning and intervention.
- Word Recognition Assessment Test (WRAT) is twice a year to monitor reading ages.

Monitoring

The subject is monitored in the form of classroom termly observations, carried out by the English Lead and DHT/HT; questionnaires, discussions with pupils and staff and book looks. Learning walks are also carried out at least once half termly for writing, spelling, handwriting and reading separately.

Data from summative assessments is analysed termly by the English Lead and findings reported to SLT. This information then informs the English Action Plan, English budget, future CPD for English Lead and other staff.

Information is passed to the Governing Body by the SLT and English Lead.

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